THE

RAGGED SCHOOL UNION Magazine.

JUNE, 1850.

Original Papers.

THE MORNING CHRONICLE *versus* RAGGED SCHOOLS.

(Concluding paper.)

ARGUMENTS, bearing upon the merits or demerits of a disputed subject, seldom receive a careful examination from general readers. A cursory glance is too often deemed sufficient, and conclusions are formed from the most striking representations that are made, however untenable. Hence, many become the adherents and advocates of error, who, on a more careful investigation, are ashamed of the opinions to which they formerly adhered.

On this species of credulity the Correspondent of the *Morning Chronicle* must have carefully calculated, when preparing his reply to our letter in defence of the London Ragged Schools. Feeling that it was matters of fact, and not mere opinions, with which he had to deal, and his utter inability to authenticate his former statements, he determines to give quantity for quality, and escaping from his difficulties as quietly and plausibly as possible, he scampers off in search of fresh evidence, a flood of which he pours upon his readers, in hopes it may surprise, if it should not convince them. So serious were the charges we brought against our opponents, that considerable alarm was felt, lest public confidence should be shaken in the communications on "Labour and the Poor." An extraordinary effort was therefore felt needful, to remove the vessel in safety from the rock against which she had unwittingly struck—more especially as creaking vessels are least impervious to rocks or storms. No less than *seven* columns of the paper were, therefore, devoted to the subject; and as it had been determined that no further communication of ours should afterwards be inserted, it was no doubt expected, that the conclusions of the public, right or wrong, would rest in favour of the "overwhelming evidence" thus afforded.

The writer opens with a *résumé* of his previously expressed objections, and then gives his own version of the manner in which we endea-

voured to disprove them. On the latter point, the following is his summary:—

"The Secretary of the Ragged School Union, seeing the dilemma in which I had placed the Society, and feeling that the only thing left to be done was to throw discredit upon my statements, endeavours to do so in a long letter, by four means:—1st, He questions my statistics; 2nd, He asserts that I obtained the statements I received in answer to unfair leading questions put by me to the witnesses; 3rd, He charges me with publishing downright falsities; and 4th, He impugns my motives, declaring that he looks on me 'as an infidel, who would deprive society of the Word of God.' Mr. Anderson's arguments in reply to my letters, therefore, may be said to be of three kinds—counter-statistics, counter-testimony, and personal abuse. The first two I shall endeavour to disprove; to the last I shall, of course, pay no heed."

So extremely evasive is the manner in which the writer endeavours to "disprove" our arguments, that were it not for the buttress he has reared, in the shape of startling yet most questionable evidence, to dazzle the minds of his readers, the weakness of his position would be at once apparent.

Referring to the circumstances we enumerated, as affecting the number of juvenile offenders in 1848, which we merely showed *he* ought to have taken into account, he represents them as 'our apology for the increase of offenders since the formation of Ragged Schools. The opinions of "Speakers at the recent Ragged School Meetings" are then given, and what he considers "the most plausible of all" their theories, namely, the scarcity of food, is put to the proof. This is done by a table showing the prices of wheat (taken from the *London Gazette*) from the years 1839 to 1848; also, the number of persons committed for trial in England and Wales during the same years. How much this has to do with the real subject in question we are at a loss to conceive; seeing that we denied, and still deny, that any average increase in the number of juvenile offenders has occurred at all. We showed, by tables, an average *decrease* of 6 per cent. in the number of juvenile offenders in the metropolis during the five years contemporary with Ragged Schools, compared with the five years preceding; and yet this "Metropolitan Correspondent" tells us, that "the number increases year by year at an overwhelming rate!" His reply to our "counter-statistics" is so elusive and full of misrepresentation, that we must place it before our readers *entire*. In doing so, we beg them again to peruse the statistical part of our former letter:—

"The Ragged School Union, be it observed, was instituted in April, 1844; and yet Mr. Anderson does not hesitate to ascribe the decrease in the number of criminals which occurred in that year—a decrease of no less than 2,716—to the influence of the Ragged Schools, though the funds at their disposal were then only £61 per annum; whereas, in 1848, when the number of juvenile offenders was nearly 17,000, those funds had increased to upwards of £4,000! 'It would be absurd to say,' acknowledges Mr. Gordon, (a Ragged School Teacher,) in a letter in reply to the facts advanced by me, 'that in the year 1844 any effect was produced by Ragged Schools, that being the year in which the Union was formed, and little or nothing done.' Mr. Anderson, however, does not think it absurd to do so, nor to credit the Ragged Schools with the entire decrease of 'the number of persons under twenty years, taken into custody *since* the establishment of the Ragged School Union in 1844.' Such are Mr. Anderson's own words; though at the very time he wrote down the figures against the year 1844, he must have known that it was not until the April of that year, when four months had already elapsed, that the Union was even founded."

Mr. Mayhew "must have known," when "he wrote down" the above statement, that in no part of our letter do we ascribe the decrease of offenders in 1844, or in any other year, to the effects of Ragged Schools. In making us to do so, he finds it necessary to prefix half a sentence to the

words he has quoted, without which they express no such meaning. We distinctly stated that to judge the utility of Ragged Schools by statistical tables, was "to test their merits by a wrong standard." We simply endeavoured to show, that during the five years succeeding the establishment of the Ragged School Union, instead of an "alarming increase," there had been an average *decrease* of offenders compared with the five years preceding—but this we ascribed to no cause whatever. We merely proved the fact. His *first* accusation brought against Ragged Schools was founded upon this alleged increase. We therefore removed the grounds of that accusation by showing that no such increase had occurred. Seeing this to be the case, he quietly evades this part of the subject, by raising a quibble respecting the year 1844. But even were we to give him the benefit of the low number of committals in that year, by throwing it into the other scale, the average decrease would be nearly the same. That our readers may see that we seek no undue advantage in this matter, we give the following table, comparing the average of four years instead of five as formerly:—

Metropolitan Juvenile Offenders.

Taken into Custody.	Number of Juvenile Offenders taken into Custody, from the Years 1841 to 1844, inclusive.	Taken into Custody.	Number of Juvenile Offenders taken into Custody, from the Years 1845 to 1848, inclusive.
In 1841	17,425	In 1845	15,128
1842	16,987	1846	15,552
1843	16,316	1847	15,698
1844	13,600	1848	16,917
Total . . .	64,328	Total . . .	63,295
Average . .	16,082	Average . .	15,823

By the above table, it will be seen that, during the four years in which Ragged Schools have been *in active operation*, there has been an average decrease in the number of juvenile offenders of 259 for each year, compared with the four years preceding. A similar result will be shown by taking into account the proportionate increase of the population.

Proportion of Criminals under Twenty Years, to the Population of the Metropolis under the same age.

Years.	Number of Persons under Twenty Years to One taken into Custody, from the Years 1841 to 1844, inclusive.	Years.	Number of Persons under Twenty Years to One taken into Custody, from the Years 1845 to 1848, inclusive.
In 1841	One in 42	In 1845	One in 51
1842	„ 44	1846	„ 50
1843	„ 46	1847	„ 50
1844	„ 56	1848	„ 47
Average . .	One in 47	Average . .	One in 49·5

Thus, there has been an average *decrease* of 5 per cent. on the number of juvenile offenders compared with the four years preceding 1845. Very

much has been said regarding a "fearful increase" in 1848, and according to Mr. Mayhew's account, some of the speakers at "the recent Ragged School Meetings" had publicly admitted that such was really the case, and tried to account for it. That a very considerable increase might have been expected in that year, will be seen from the particular occurrences which we formerly enumerated. But, on comparing it with the two years preceding 1844, *in each of which years, be it remembered, Mr. Mayhew says there was "a rapid and extensive* DECREASE," we find that the increase in 1848 is not very alarming. In the year 1842, there was one youth taken into custody in the metropolis in every 44 under the same age. In 1843, one in every 46—*but in* 1848, *there was only one committed in every* 47. Look at the matter, therefore, in whatever light we may, we are led to the conclusion that the juvenile criminality of London is not on the increase, and that the statistical conclusions of the *Morning Chronicle* on that subject are utterly fallacious. This, we presume, the Correspondent sees pretty clearly, if we may judge from the manner in which he contrives to shift his position, from the firm and bold stand formerly taken on the "stubborn array of facts and figures" he then adduced. Would our readers suppose that the following paragraphs were written by the same individual, on the same subject, and for the same newspaper? They are taken from the first and last of his letters on the subject:—

"I shall, in the first place, endeavour to test their efficacy by the returns of the number of juvenile offenders since their establishment. This, I am aware, is putting them to a severe test; but if we find that the young criminals have been decreasing rapidly in number from the year 1845, (the first year in which the Ragged Schools were brought into extensive operation in the metropolis,) then we may readily assume that they are among our most noble and valuable institutions. If, however, the official reports show that, notwithstanding the rapid and great increase of these establishments, the juvenile offenders have in no way declined in numbers, then we may safely conclude, on the other hand, that, as at present conducted, they are of little or no service."—*March* 19*th*.

"*I consider the mere circumstance of the increase of the juvenile offenders of the metropolis a matter of comparatively little weight against the Ragged Schools.* The evidence that I believe to be conclusive against those institutions, viewed as correctives of crime, is the co-existence of that fact with the decreased ignorance and increased education of the criminal class, as well as with the equally important fact, that the ignorance and crime of different counties bear no relation to one another."—*April* 15*th*.

Here is an admission, taken into connection with the fact that there has been *no* increase, but an average *decrease* in the number of juvenile offenders since Ragged Schools were established, which, according to the writer's own statement, destroys the whole of the evidence he *now* considers "conclusive against those institutions, viewed as correctives of crime." Since the number of juvenile offenders is *not* increasing, the increased education of the class can, therefore, have very little to do with the merits or demerits of Ragged Schools. We believe a question of very great importance—and to which Mr. Mayhew has not adverted—bearing not only on Ragged Schools, but more especially upon the condition of the working population generally, *is the proportion of the juvenile offenders in our prisons who really belong to the ragged and vagrant class.* This ought to be ascertained before Ragged Schools are charged with the entire increase of the educated portion of young criminals.

The following letter from the Rev. H. Smith, the Chaplain of Parkhurst

Prison, has a very direct bearing upon this part of the subject. When it is remembered that the inmates of that prison are exclusively *juvenile* offenders, and that for many years the writer has given a prayerful and most devoted attention to every circumstance bearing upon their character and condition, it must at once be admitted, that his testimony is of equal, if not of superior value, to that of the chaplain or governor of any other prison in the kingdom:—

"*Parkhurst Prison, May 4th*, 1850.

"Sir,—I have received your letter, inquiring 'whether there are many children in this prison whose fall may be ascribed to associations formed in Ragged Schools,' and 'whether I consider the increase of the partially educated class of criminals to be chiefly owing to the effects of these institutions.'

"In answer to the first question I beg to say, that I have not met with a single prisoner who has attributed the beginning or the continuation of his criminality to this cause. Indeed, we have not half-a-dozen boys here who have ever been to Ragged Schools; if they had, I am persuaded numbers of them would not have been here at all. I do not wish to be understood that I have specifically questioned our prisoners on this point; for if I had, it is not likely the truth would have been told me, seeing the criminal class generally answer as they think we wish them to answer, in order to make us pleased with our own acuteness and their candour. My knowledge of the past history of the boys is gained incidentally, and at various times, while conversing with them on other subjects. If, therefore, we had any here such as you inquire after, I am satisfied I should have known it. But to make sure in this matter, I have repeated your inquiry to the excellent governor of this prison, and he authorizes me to say, that the result of his experience is precisely the same as my own.

"What I have said partly answers your second question. In my opinion, the increase in the number of the partially educated class of criminals, is to be attributed chiefly to the fact, that in most jails and prisons, especially those of cities and large towns, great attention has of late years been paid to the instruction of the juvenile inmates of them; and, in numbers of cases, I have observed that those who have been in prison the oftenest and longest, are precisely those who can read, write, etc., the best; I have said *chiefly*, because the above-mentioned increase may, in some measure, be attributed to the general diffusion of schools for the poor, for large numbers of our boys have been, for longer or shorter periods, to National, British, and other schools. I will take this opportunity of recording my high opinion of the value of Ragged Schools. They have, I believe, prevented much crime, and reformed many vicious children. The accompanying letter tells its own tale, and contains a case in point of the most gratifying description.*

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* The following is the letter above referred to:—

"*Ragged Dormitory and School of Industry, St. Ann's Street, Westminster.*

"Sir,—I trust you will pardon the liberty I have taken in addressing you respecting my poor brother, who was an inmate of your institution about four years ago, who was sent to New Zealand in the ship St. John. If you would kindly give me any information respecting him I should feel very thankful, or put me in the way to hear from him. Sir, being left at an early age, I had no other prospect before me but the workhouse or thieving, for a living. I first applied to the workhouse—then being free from crime. Sir, I entered that nursery of crime, and came from it deeply steeped in sin. I then resorted to thieving for my bread, hardly knowing right from wrong, and not caring who was the sufferer. I little thought that God was

"I do not say that Ragged Schools are perfect, but they appear to me the best that your funds and the pressing exigencies of the case will allow. To improve them, however, I will make a definite proposal, and to it I invite the attention of all, especially of those who cry down Ragged Schools. Let asylums be built in the country where land may be taken, partly cultivated and partly uncultivated; let our ragged children be drained off from the contaminating association of their drunken parents and vicious neighbours, and be put into them; there train them to work in the open air, in cultivating the soil; and if they are under judicious, firm, kind, Christian treatment, and if expensive arrangements are avoided, they will soon be self-supporting; the inmates will, by God's blessing, be reformed, and prepared to discharge the duties of their proper station. This, in connection with Emigration, is just what the masses of our juvenile population require, and, in the end, would be the best economy. This, too, is an object worthy of the advocacy of the *Morning Chronicle*, and I beg you will draw the attention of that paper to it, and then we will all forgive the unfounded attack it has made upon Ragged Schools.

"I am, Sir, your obedient Servant,

"H. SMITH."

That, through the education imparted at Ragged Schools, very much juvenile criminality has been *prevented*, we strongly believe, and nothing has yet been advanced by our opponents to force us to a contrary conclusion.

In concluding this part of the subject, we mention a circumstance which came under our own notice, as bearing on our former remarks on the occurrences of 1848. One Sabbath evening, in the spring of that year, we visited a Ragged School in Mile End. The evening being fine, we were not a little surprised to find so very few grown-up children on the streets. At length we were informed, that they were all in Victoria Park at a Chartist meeting, where about 10,000 persons had assembled to make preparations for "the 10th of April." Presently, a man came along the streets, followed by a large number of people, with his head uncovered, and blood streaming down his face. He had been struck by the police, while they were endeavouring to disperse the mob, and he had determined to traverse the streets of the metropolis, and by exhibiting his wounds, endeavour to excite public sympathy on behalf of himself and his coadjutors; but on reaching the Strand, he was lodged in the Bow Street Station-house.

On entering the Ragged School, we were gratefully surprised to find about ninety-five youths (entirely of the ragged class) sitting quietly with Bibles and class-books in their hands, listening to the instructions of their

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looking upon me. Thus I went on for nine years, getting deeper and deeper in sin, till I was directed to Mr. Nash, the master of this school, who kindly received me, and used the first kind word that I had heard for years—'I'll try you, and if you behave yourself I will be your friend, and will recommend you to Lord Ashley for a free passage to Australia, as an emigrant.' He admitted me into the Dormitory, and treated me more like a father than a master, and convinced me that there was hope for me in heaven if I truly repented of my sins. I have been in this school for four months; there are fifteen others, who are chiefly supported from the master's own income. If you will favour me with an answer I shall feel very thankful. Sir, had not this kind gentleman took me in, there is no doubt but that I should have been *transported*.

"Sir, I remain your humble and obedient servant,

"STEPHEN WHITEHEAD."

"Rev. H. SMITH."

"P.S. My brother's name is John Whitehead; sentenced to ten years' transportation."

teachers, and evidently showing, by their appearance and demeanour, that "thievish plots" or Chartist riots were things very far from their thoughts. We feel assured, however, from the class and character of these youths, that had it not been for the Ragged School, a large majority of the ninety-five would have been actively engaged in Victoria Park. What the consequences might have been, and how far such circumstances show the bearing that Ragged Schools must have had upon the juvenile commitments of that year, apart from individual cases of reformation, we leave our readers to judge.

Respecting the "counter-testimony" which we advanced, the Correspondent seems to feel very acutely. It is not a pleasant thing to be charged "with publishing downright falsities," nor is the position of the accuser a very agreeable one, even when compelled to do so by a sense of duty. Not one charge did we make that we were not prepared fully to substantiate, and he has not disproved a single statement we advanced. On this part of the subject he says: "For myself, I can but declare most emphatically and unequivocally that such assertions, and the evidence by which they are attempted to be supported, are utterly destitute of truth." This denial is followed by letters from two persons in his own employ—one a *discharged* City Missionary, and the other his own reporter. The former attempts to disprove what we never stated—namely, that the very worst cases were selected for examination; and the other reiterates the statement of his employer, declaring every particular we advanced to be untrue.

A note is then given from Lieut. Tracy, of Tothill Fields Prison, denying, "most emphatically," that leading questions were put to the children examined there. But it ought to be remembered, that our reference to leading questions applied to the cases generally, and not merely to those in Tothill Fields. This will be seen from the fact, that we only referred to one case in that prison; and the accuracy of the boy's statement, *as having been given by him*, we never questioned; but we showed that the narrative itself was altogether a fabrication. This fact, Lieut. Tracy himself may easily discover. When this gentleman became so decided an objector to the present system of Ragged Schools we know not, but it may be interesting to our readers to compare the favourable reference he makes to them, in his Report of Tothill Fields Prison, with his evidence published in the *Morning Chronicle*. The first is dated February 23rd, 1850, and the other appeared in the *Chronicle* on the 25th of March; so that the time between the Report and the evidence *is only four weeks*:—

"The want of education, and the entire want of industrial training amongst countless numbers of such parties, is powerfully evidenced, and the lamentable state of ignorance in which they are found, renders the occasional attempts at reformation a work of no ordinary magnitude, alike both difficult and discouraging; and it might not be considered out of place here to state, that at this moment, in this parish, (St. John's, Westminster,) in a very small portion of a most abandoned neighbourhood, ('Duck Lane,') a Ragged School is in operation, (but with very limited means,) attempting a mental and industrial education, to no less than 200 children, in a building recently known

"I, therefore, called upon Lieut. Tracy, the Governor of Tothill Fields Prison, to inquire into this subject. He expressed an opinion—cursorily given, he said—that Ragged Schools were not adapted to the reformation of the juvenile criminals of London who resorted there; inasmuch as the great evil to be guarded against, to arrest the progress of criminality, was the *congregating* of criminals. Evil always resulted, and must result, from that; and criminal offenders met in Ragged Schools and congregated afterwards."

Again, on April 25th it is said, that "the opinion of Lieut. Tracy on this subject is as decisive as that of Capt. Chesterton;" and the evidence of the

as a notorious public-house for thieves; and the squalid condition of these poor outcasts, who are all young, is a painful illustration of the destitution prevailing in the locality to which I have before alluded."

latter gentleman is, "that he considered Ragged Schools, from the indiscriminate mingling of good and bad boys together, calculated to have a pernicious, rather than a beneficial effect."

The writer in the *Morning Chronicle* has felt that it is easier to make plausible and deliberate assertions than to prove them, and hence the only witnesses he is able to produce, in vindication of his former testimony, are *two persons in his own employ*. On the 6th of May we addressed another letter to the *Chronicle*, exposing the falsehoods contained in the letters of those parties, and furnishing incontestible proof of all, and even more, than we formerly advanced upon the subject. The letter was shortly afterwards returned to us, accompanied with a formal note, *refusing to insert it*. The principal portion of that letter we now lay before our readers, as it appeared in the *Daily News* on the 16th of May. We earnestly bespeak a most careful perusal of its contents. The testimonies therein given are most conclusive; they afford indubitable proof, that the charges brought against Ragged Schools chiefly consisted of falsities and perverted statements, such as no impartial writer would ever have published.

FALSE TESTIMONY AGAINST RAGGED SCHOOLS.

To the Editor of the Daily News.

SIR,—You were among the first to defend those humble institutions from the unfounded charges lately brought against them by the Correspondent of the *Morning Chronicle*. The simple, yet eloquent statements in favour of these schools, given by the parents of ragged children, found a place in your columns, when denied it in that journal, although its pages have lately been teeming with flaming professions of sympathy for the neglected and suffering poor. The testimony of that "cloud of witnesses," as you justly termed them, was more than sufficient to counteract the highly coloured statements which appeared in the *Morning Chronicle*, even if those statements had been true. But of their truth or falsehood, the public ought to have every possible means of judging. I shall, therefore, feel obliged if you can favour me with space in your columns, for the testimony of another "cloud of witnesses" of a different character, and who were lately represented as saying very different things. This opportunity has been denied me in the columns of the *Morning Chronicle*.

In a letter of mine, which lately appeared in that journal, I showed that much of the evidence lately published against Ragged Schools was without foundation, and that statements had been obtained from children and others, by means of "leading questions." This the Correspondent of the *Morning Chronicle* flatly contradicted, without referring, even in a single instance, to his original witnesses, who were certainly best able to confirm the accuracy of their own evidence. Not willing to depend upon mere verbal statements, I lately wrote to several of those parties, requesting them to state to me in writing how far they agreed to the evidence published as theirs in the columns of that journal. The strong and decided replies I have received to my inquiries contain so complete an exposure of the manner in which "a case has been got up" against Ragged Schools, that, to "make assurance doubly sure," I must give the names and addresses of the writers, so that sceptical readers may have the means of satisfying themselves that those letters are purely authentic.

On the 25th of March, a statement appeared in the *Morning Chronicle*, said to have been related by a gentleman formerly a superintendent of

police in Westminster, in which many doubts were expressed respecting the efficacy of Ragged Schools, and the propriety of assembling so many good and bad children together. How far that was a fair statement of his expressed opinions will now be seen from his own letter. He evidently feels aggrieved at the manner in which he has been misrepresented by the Correspondent of that journal, and it is certainly due to him and to the cause of humanity that his real sentiments should be made known. It ought to be stated that he had not seen the *Chronicle* until the morning on which the following letter was written:—

"5, *Tufton Street, Westminster, May* 3*rd*, 1850.

"Sir,—I have just read the letter on Ragged Schools in the *Morning Chronicle* of March 25th, and to my surprise, I find the statement there given as that of 'A Retired Superintendent of Police,' is such, that I have no hesitation in saying is at variance in many particulars with the verbal communication I held with two gentlemen on the subject. I cannot conceive how such a colour could be given to the plain testimony as to the good done by the Ragged Schools, except on the supposition of strong prejudice against the schools, or some purpose to be served thereby, either of which I am unwilling to attribute to the gentlemen. I find in general, that which was stated by me respecting the vast number of children of the lower class in Westminster, is by the letter in the *Chronicle* all laid to the charge of those attending the Ragged Schools, whereas this was far from my thoughts or meaning. I was giving a true statement of what I knew and had seen for years before Ragged Schools were thought of; and yet, strange to say, all this has been considered as only applicable to the present state of the Ragged Schools. But, even in this statement, as published in the *Chronicle*, I am made to say things I never did say, and other things, although true, are attributed to the wrong person. In speaking of adult thieves, standing at the corners of streets and courts talking over their exploits, I am made to say that the children going to the Ragged Schools will stop and listen to those fellows, and know they live well, and so they may go to the Ragged School to say to others what a fine life a thief's was. This was not said of boys going to a Ragged School, but of boys who never went to any school, but were constantly roaming about the streets all day long; and who could wonder that such boys became thieves? The whole tone and manner of the published statement is most unfair, and tends to convey a meaning to the public quite opposite to the opinions I expressed, but so blended with the general subject, that it becomes difficult to unravel the web so well woven, nor is it worth the labour when accomplished. I feel assured that time, with the blessing of Almighty God, will bring out, to the satisfaction of the public, the good aimed at by the originators of Ragged Schools, and that their judgment will shine forth as the noonday.

"I am, Sir, your humble and obedient Servant,

"EDWARD LOWRY."

To Mr. Lowry's case may be added numerous parallels. In the same paper, the Correspondent says that he called upon two boys apprenticed from the Westminster Juvenile Refuge, who stated that they knew several honest boys who were led astray by young thieves at school.

In my letter to the *Chronicle*, on the 22nd April, I gave a counter-statement made to me by one of those boys, and confirmed by his master. This is contradicted by a person in the employ of the "Special Correspondent," who denies that leading questions were put, and adds—"I myself took the statements of the apprentices alluded to by Mr. Anderson." From this it would appear that both gentlemen were present—the one putting questions, and the other taking notes; but the true version of the

case shows that either the Correspondent or his assistant had never seen the apprentices at all, and that the accounts in the *Chronicle* ascribed to those boys had been written afterwards from memory. This is evident from the following letter:—

"Sir,—There was a person called on me a few weeks ago, to ask some questions regarding my apprentice, John Jones. I now declare that the answers in the *Morning Chronicle*, said to be given by my apprentice, were false; and also, as I stated before, the gentleman put questions to the boy in such a manner as would have made him say anything, by merely getting him to assent to it. I was present all the time. He was by himself, and wrote nothing down when questioning. He asked me to have a glass of ale. When in the public-house, he was speaking of how the boys were brought up. I mentioned that I always sent my apprentice to church on Sunday; at times he did not seem very willing to go. The gentleman's reply was, that if boys were to work through the week, they required Sunday for recreation; *so much praying and psalm-singing did boys no good.* I thought this a very strange remark from him.

"I am, Sir, your obedient Servant,

"23, *Green Street, Leicester Square,* "JAMES MANN."
May 1*st*, 1850."

The following is from the master of the other apprentice:—

"Sir,—I beg to inform you that only one gentleman called to make inquiries of my apprentice, who stated he had been sent by the Ragged School Union. I still adhere to what I formerly stated to you, that I had strong objections to the gentleman's method of putting questions to the boy, and gaining answers which he neither understood nor intended.

"I am, Sir, yours respectfully,

"THOMAS SCEARS."

"8, *West Street, Golden Square,*
April 30*th*, 1850."

The counter-statement I gave of a policeman in Lambeth—which was given in the *Daily News* on the 29th April—is said by the Correspondent's assistant to have been made by me, and is "altogether false." The following letter forwarded to me, signed by three gentlemen of respectability in Lambeth, will show how far this is correct:—

"Sir,—We beg to state, that the policeman has again in our presence reiterated the statements he formerly made to you respecting the Lambeth Schools, and which appeared in your letter in the *Morning Chronicle* on the 22nd April. He is particularly positive as to what passed between him and the Correspondent of the *Morning Chronicle* in reference to the children purchasing Bibles. He says, he was in the middle of a sentence, stating the number of children who pay for Bibles on a Sabbath evening, when he was interrupted by one of the gentlemen, who said, 'Ah, well, never mind that—we don't want to put that down.' He states that this was so clearly impressed upon his mind, that he afterwards mentioned it to another police-officer, and they both concluded that neither of the gentlemen were favourable to Ragged Schools. He also adheres to the account given in your letter as to the form of leading questions put by the Correspondent, and denies ever having said that the neighbourhood was as bad as formerly. In short, he adheres to the entire correctness of the account given by you, and positively denies the truth of that furnished by the Correspondent of the *Morning Chronicle*. He would willingly have written a letter to you himself, confirming this statement, but the rules of

the police force do not allow an officer to write anything with a view to publication.

"We are, Sir, most respectfully yours,

"T. E. DAVIS,
"WM. CULVERWELL,
"FREDK. DOULTON."

"*High Street, Lambeth, May 4th*, 1850."

The Rev. Foster Rogers, the Assistant-Chaplain of Tothill Fields Prison, is instanced as another witness against Ragged Schools. Knowing that this gentleman was once favourable to these institutions, and had advocated their claims in public, I addressed a letter to him, inquiring into the nature of the circumstances that led to a change of his views. The following letter I received in reply:—

"*House of Correction, Tothill Fields, Westminster, April 30th*, 1850.

"Sir,—As you have called my attention to the manner in which my name is introduced by the Correspondent of the *Morning Chronicle*, in his letter on the subject of Ragged Schools, as being contrary to my previously expressed opinions on the same subject, I beg to state in reply, that the sentence to which you advert, as it is in the *Chronicle*, is incorrectly reported, though I believe unintentionally so on the part of the writer. The sentence in the paper runs thus: 'The Assistant-Chaplain gave me permission to state, that he considered the indiscriminate association of the good and bad children at Ragged Schools to be fraught with great danger.' Correctly, it should be thus: 'Considered the indiscriminate association of good and bad children, under any circumstances, fraught with great danger without proper surveillance.' There is a material difference between these sentences. The former obviously represents me as opposed to the principle and operations of Ragged Schools—the latter leaves that point untouched. The one makes me condemn, without qualification, the principle of the schools—the other is merely the admission, which every friend of Ragged Schools is ready to make, viz., that some evil may possibly arise out of the association of good and bad children in the schools. That the latter was my opinion, the Correspondent of the *Morning Chronicle* must have known, as I most distinctly avowed to him that I was a friend to Ragged Schools. That gentleman must further remember, that I intimated my conviction that the course he was pursuing did not furnish a proper or conclusive test of the efficiency of your schools. His mode of procedure was as follows: He mustered 117 boys, and selected 53 out of that number as having attended Ragged Schools, and proposed to each of them the following questions—'How many times were you in prison before you went to a Ragged School?' 'How many times afterwards?' The result was, that 15 of the 53 confessed they were in the habit of thieving before going to a Ragged School, 38 afterwards. Thus the readers of the *Morning Chronicle* are led to believe that the 38 boys who were not imprisoned until after their attendance at Ragged Schools were corrupted by Ragged School associations, which is not the fact. My proposition was, to ascertain as far as possible whether boys were accustomed to steal before going to a Ragged School, and not whether they were in prison before attending one; and that this would have been the more correct test of the character of Ragged Schools will appear if one of the 53 boys on the Correspondent's list be selected as an example. Thus: J. C., one of the 53, ascribed his fall to Ragged School association; he stated that he had been in Grey's Yard Ragged School for two months, about two years ago—that he was taught to thieve by T. A., now in this jail, and also by B. M. and — C.

The boy wept as he related the manner of his being led away, and no cross-examination of mine could invalidate his testimony; so that I admitted to the Correspondent it was 'a bad case' of Ragged School demoralization. It so happened, by undesigned coincidence, that the young man, T. A., to whom the boy in question ascribed his fall, had put his name down to speak with the chaplain the day the Correspondent was here. When he was brought to my room by the schoolmaster, the latter observed, as he ushered him in, 'This man can tell you something about the boy J. C.' I immediately examined him, and the result was, that the boy had been a systematic thief for four years or more, and that about that time he had been with T. A. at Edgeware races for dishonest purposes. I recalled the Correspondent of the *Morning Chronicle*, who had then left the wards and gone into the front court of the jail, and directed his attention to the matter, allowing him to cross-examine T. A., in consequence of which he struck the boy off his list, and admitted it was 'no case.' I ought to add, that the boy himself has since admitted he was in the habit of stealing apples before he went to a Ragged School, adding in extenuation of his previous denial of the fact, and of the crime itself—'It was only some apples!' It occurs to me that this boy is included in the Correspondent's list of fifty-three. From this case it will be seen that my proposition would supply the true test of the actual character of boys before going to Ragged Schools, and that the Correspondent's is not a proper test of their efficiency. And now, after attentively reading all the *Morning Chronicle* has adduced, I beg to say that I adhere still to the principle and working of Ragged Schools as they are. I do not mean by this that they are perfect, or do not admit of modification or improvement, though I observe the objectors have no proposition to advance for their renovation. The Correspondent tells us, indeed, he longs to see 'free schools' for the poor honest children opened. So do the friends of Ragged Schools. But what is to be done for the poor dishonest children, and the poor vicious children, and swearing children? Are we to open 'thieves' schools,' 'swearers' schools,' and 'free schools' also? If so, how are we to exclude the 'bad children' from the free school? Can we induce children, however depraved, to brand themselves with the character of thief, and expose themselves to the 'detective force,' by going to an avowedly 'thieves' school?' Or are we to act upon the principle, that to leave them in ignorance will tend to lessen crime and curtail the calendar? If crime *decreases* just in proportion as 'the ability to read and write' disappears, then may we pass by the fallen and depraved. For my part, till the objectors to your schools come forward with a more feasible plan than the Ragged School one, I shall not cease to 'wish you God-speed.' As long as the true 'type of the education received at Ragged Schools' is, as I know it to be, not merely 'reading and writing,' *but moral and religious instruction*—as long as you act consistently with your present principles, endeavouring to impart the knowledge of those Scriptures which are able to make even a child 'wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus'—so long will you be certain of success. Continue, I advise you, to proclaim even to thieves, if you can, the character and gospel of Him, whose last words of comfort and encouragement were addressed to a dying thief. We, who are daily mixed up with this pitiable class of the community, feel the great want which exists for reformatory institutions, for those of them who come within the walls of a jail; and I, for one, shall greatly regret if the substitutes for more suitable institutions—which we occasionally find in Ragged Schools—should suffer through the adverse statements that have been, I fear, too precipitately advanced. Nor can I conclude without observing, that my experience proves to me that most of the evil which is ascribed to Ragged

Schools might more easily be traced, and more justly be ascribed, to crowded dwellings, to dry arches, idle corners, drunken parents, etc., than to Ragged Schools. I believe it will be found no easy task to produce one case where there is conclusive proof that *principles* have been corrupted by your schools. That a few cases may be found where children have been led into dishonest practices by Ragged School associations I am free to admit; but I maintain that, even in these cases, it will appear that a predisposing influence had long been at work upon the minds of such children, and that they would have become thieves as soon and certainly as if they had never entered your schools. You are at liberty to make any use you please of this letter, if you consider my humble testimony likely to advance the good of Ragged Schools.

"I remain, Sir, yours faithfully,

"FOSTER ROGERS, Assist.-Chaplain."

There is no secresy about these letters; their authenticity may be easily tested. They show, as distinctly as the written and deliberate testimony of respectable men *can* show, that many of the statements against Ragged Schools published in the *Morning Chronicle* are at variance with truth—that favourable accounts have been suppressed—and that most unjustifiable means have been resorted to, under the guise of a high-toned philanthropy, in order to blacken and disparage one of the most benevolent and merciful enterprises of our age and country. Unless the writer of those statements can prove that the above letters are counterfeit, in justice to the institutions of the poor he has so unmercifully assailed, and to the individuals whose evidence he has so clearly misrepresented, he ought, in accordance with his own promise, to "acknowledge his error in the most public manner possible," and also to retract the statements he has published respecting my letter, in which he says that "it is not merely unfounded in one point alone, but in every particular, from beginning to end."

It is painful to make such charges as these, but the interests of truth and humanity must not be sacrificed; and the exposure is the more needful, seeing that those very parties have lately been endeavouring to eclipse their contemporaries by a show of unusual philanthropy. If the letters on Ragged Schools are taken as a specimen—and they are the principal cases that have been thoroughly tested—the public may do well to exercise due caution in giving credence to the whole budget; and to see whether the best interests of "Labour and the Poor" have not been more surely benefited by the less ostentatious labours of other journals. I make no conjecture, but the whole affair strongly reminds me of some of those vagrants whose romantic narratives lately appeared in the columns of the *Chronicle*. Often put to their shifts for a living—the world hinting that it can do without them—they are forced to conjure up startling and most ingenious statements, in order to secure a precarious existence, which they would fail to do after the manner of more useful men, who pursue the "even tenor of their way."

Expressing gratitude for the assistance you are ever ready to render to the cause of humanity in general, and the destitute and neglected juvenile poor in particular, I am, etc.,

ALEXANDER ANDERSON.

Ragged School Union, 15, *Exeter Hall*,
May 11*th*, 1850.

The *pretended* anxiety of the "Special Correspondent" for accurate information, is perfectly irreconcilable with the plain and straightforward

statements contained in the above letters. Such expressions used by him as the following, are not without their use upon the unsuspecting:—"It is a subject upon which I am most anxious not to err;" "I can assure you my object is simply to come at the truth, upon this most important question;" "To assure myself—that I had not been guilty of an injustice which I should ever regret;" "Our sole object has been the development of truth, and it has caused us no little pain to be compelled to denounce institutions that were admitted by all to have been designed and sustained by the purest and most benevolent feelings;" "I have been at considerable pains in collecting the evidence of the most experienced persons upon this point," "so that I might do the Society no injustice by using unauthenticated sources of information." But what say those very parties from whom that information is *said* to have been obtained?—"I cannot conceive," says one, "how such a colour could have been given to my plain testimony;" "I am made to say things I never did say;" "The whole tone and manner of the published statement is most unfair, and tends to convey a meaning to the public quite opposite to the opinions I expressed;" "The answers in the *Morning Chronicle*," says another, "said to be given by my apprentice, were false;" "The gentleman put questions to the boy in such a manner as would have made him say anything;" "He," the policeman, "positively denies the truth of that furnished by the Correspondent;" "The gentleman's reply was, that the boys required Sunday for recreation —so much praying and psalm-singing did boys no good." These short and simple extracts afford, at one view, a complete confirmation of every statement we have advanced upon the subject. We have in no case descended to "personal abuse," nor in speaking of our opponent have we in any instance "branded him as an infidel," however widely our opinions may differ from his, in regard to "so much praying and psalm-singing," even for ragged boys. Every step we have taken in our investigations has more surely convinced us, that "the whole tone and manner of the published statements were most unfair," and that almost every useful feature, or favourable statement regarding the institutions, has been misrepresented or suppressed. The following extract from the writer's description of the Westminster Refuge we place "side by side" with an extract from another daily paper, as a sample of the spirit in which the inquiry was conducted:—

"The master tailor, who was the only officer in attendance when I called, did not know, he said, of any boy having been transported; nor could he at first remember any boy having been imprisoned from that school. At last he suddenly recollected that two boys were in prison at that time from the Ragged School, (the two I had seen in Tothill Fields;) even this fact, however, he could not remember, until reminded of it by my inquiry, whether Ragged Schools were not intended, if possible, to bring about the reformation of thieves. Neither did he know of any of the boys who had been in prison within the last twelve months; but the school boys present (one especially) numbered up eight very rapidly. 'When a boy disappears,' he added,

"Of the present effective working of the Westminster Refuge I have had an opportunity of judging. The house is humble enough, but it contains all necessary economy. The boys are more orderly than in most schools that I have seen. They all belong to the neighbourhood, and are constantly under the master's eye. Since the establishment of the school, only one boy has turned out badly, and there were several unusual circumstances in his case. The majority of the children can read, and many are further advanced. The industrial department is highly interesting. Here, in a little room set apart for them, may be seen lads of from fourteen years of age and upwards, employed in shoemaking, which seems to be their principal occupation. They

the Ragged School managers do not inquire after him, as they have not time to go to the police-office. They keep no records of the imprisonment of their scholars. The articles made by the boys, I was informed, were given to the scholars as rewards for good conduct. I found out afterwards, by inquiry among the boys, that a small price was charged for them. I was furnished with an account of the number of shoes, jackets, etc., made by the boys in the course of last year, and, upon investigation, I found that '48 boys in school had received 19 jackets, 34 pairs of trousers, and 28 pairs of shoes;' four of the lads, however, were without shoes, and five wore women's or girls' boots, and often odd boots."—*Morning Chronicle.*

make shoes for themselves and the children, to whom these articles are often freely given if the parents are too poor to purchase them, even at the small price asked. The specimens of their workmanship which were shown me were highly creditable—some of them had been produced after only a few months' instruction. They are also employed in making clothes, and with, I believe, equal success. These boys have all been in prison—some of them several times. They are now as honest and industrious as can well be, and seemed contented and happy enough."—*Daily News.*

From the above it will be seen, that in the one case a fair and impartial view is taken of the institution, such as any of our readers would, or may have taken, when visiting it; to the other, the interesting and useful features of the school possess no attraction, but a morbid anxiety is manifested for cases of delinquency, transportation, or imprisonment. Numerous questions are asked about robberies and ruinous associates; but had the master stated the number of children who had been reformed and made useful members of society, he might have been met with a similar reply to that of the Lambeth policeman, "We don't want to put that down." It matters not what means we adopt or agencies we employ—they all meet with a similar condemnation. Reading and writing is not education, and by teaching those branches of knowledge to the poor, we merely increase their powers for mischief. *Our moral and religious training is scarcely worth being named;* and if we train the poor children to industrial habits, by teaching them to make or repair their own clothes, we are charged with "adding to the poverty, and perhaps the crime of the country." Thus, we are condemned at every step we take, and yet our accusers supply us not with a better remedy. We are left to grope in the dark as before—to pursue the evil course we have adopted, or turn the children again into the streets! Such is the amount of practical information we have received, after our work has been assailed, falsified, and misrepresented.

It were idle to enter into a further refutation of the equally questionable evidence contained in the reply. That teachers should declare that Ragged Schools "do more harm than good to the community," and yet spend their time and money in supporting them, is an assertion too absurd to require contradiction.

We have not only questioned, but disproved, the writer's statistics. We have also proved that answers were obtained from the witnesses by "unfair leading questions." We have not merely charged him with "publishing downright falsities," but confirmed that charge by the written testimony of his own witnesses. We have called upon him, publicly, either to disprove that written testimony, or, *according to promise*, make a public acknowledgment of his error; but on both points he is silent. On the other hand, we have the testimony of four hundred mothers, and sixty fathers of Ragged School children, in favour of the schools; supported by the experience of the teachers of six thousand children, whose

time and energies have been devoted to their best interests. In addition to this, we have given the evidence of the Chaplains of *six* prisons, all testifying to the individual and general benefits accruing from Ragged School labours. Thus far, and we believe fully, have we disproved the charges of our assailants, and freed those useful institutions of the poor from accusations which were neither generous nor just. In doing so, we have not attempted to excel in controversy; we had a higher work to perform. It is the cause of the poor and the fatherless, the orphan and the widow, that has been assailed; and as such we have striven to defend it. The work was not one of choice, but necessity; through the blessing of our God, it may not be without its use. We have nothing further to say of our opponents; they cannot have suffered "personal abuse" by having falsehood divested of its covering, and exposed to the world as it ever should be. We are strongly convinced, that to them the most objectionable feature of our work is its religious character—the very salt that preserves it. So long as this element is maintained in its purity, the friends of Ragged Schools have nothing to fear; they have only to be steadfast, unmovable, and faithful to their trust; and it will grow and expand, despite of every tempest, until thousands more of our outcast children find a refuge under its spreading branches, and, fed by the bread of life, they may grow up the sons and daughters of the Lord almighty. It is our comfort to know that some have been led into the fold of Christ, and others are turning their faces thitherwards. We can ill afford to have obstructions cast in the way of a work so needful, and beset with so many difficulties. And although we have little time to spend in their removal, yet we shall never shrink from the task when the interests of truth and humanity are to be defended; nor shall our efforts, however feeble, be unavailing, while (as we stated at the commencement of this periodical) "the indestructibility of our cause is in itself; seeing it has truth for its foundation, love for its instrumentality, the Bible for its rule of action, and the glory of God for its end."

Correspondence.

We have much pleasure in laying before our readers a few of the communications we have received from friends in different parts of the country, expressing their entire concurrence in our views, and satisfaction with our exposure of the plausible misrepresentations and falsities of the *Morning Chronicle*. The notes which immediately follow are from friends who have manifested a *practical* sympathy, thereby showing that their convictions of our integrity are too strong to evaporate in mere sentiment. In words and deeds they speak for themselves:—

"*May 3rd*, 1850.

"Dear Sir,—I have the pleasure of inclosing to you, herewith, my annual subscription to the General Fund of the "Ragged School Union," falling due, I believe, this month. You will perceive that I have, on the present occasion, *doubled* the amount usually sent in spring. I confess that I have done this in consequence of the persecution raised against the schools. I would prefer depriving myself of some customary indulgence, or even requisite, if by so doing I can afford an additional mite of assistance to a cause so holy, and so unjustly aspersed.

"I have ever considered the being permitted to bear a part, however insignificant, in a work so Christianizing and important, and undertaken in such exact accordance with the most simple, the most obvious, and the most practical precepts of

our faith, in the light of a privilege calling for devout acknowledgment. Small, indeed, is the amount of self-satisfaction which those who, like myself, contribute little save pecuniary aid, can be allowed to experience. It is to yourself, Sir, and to the other *workers* in the cause, that all the inward peace and consolation, as well as all the outward honours of success, must belong. I know, indeed, that it is not "the praises of men" which, in this case, are looked to as the reward; but that the inspiration and motive for exertion is the desire to extend in our own land, and to glorify in the sight of mankind, the praises of the Lord of life and Saviour of the world.

"I remain, Sir, your faithful Servant,
"M. E. J. S."

"*Hornsey, 6th May*, 1850.

"My good Sir,—Having already sent three donations for the Ragged Schools, I did intend that to suffice; but, in consequence of the illiberally unmanly attack in the *Morning Chronicle*, (which you have so ably confuted,) I now inclose a cheque on Glyn & Co. for five guineas, to be placed either to the General or Emigration Fund, as you may consider most advantageous.

"I am, Sir, with respect, yours truly,
"W. S. A."

"P.S.—I think that Mr. Mayhew might find something better to do."

"*Chudleigh, May 6th*, 1850.

"Sir,—I do not know whether I may be correct in directing to you, but as the Post Office requires the Christian name at full length, and I have learned yours from your signature to the letter in the Magazine for this month, I beg to inclose a Post Office order for £5, as a donation from a lady in Devonshire, in token of entire conviction as to the fallacy and misrepresentations of the articles published in the *Morning Chronicle* against the character and value of Ragged Schools.

"I remain, Sir, yours, with respect,
"J. C."

The following letter, from George Bell, Esq., M.D., Author of "Day and Night in the Wynds of Edinburgh," will be read with interest. It is the testimony of one experimentally acquainted with the condition of our neglected poor, and the best means yet devised for their moral elevation. Of this every one must be convinced who has read his excellent and heart-stirring pamphlet on the subject:—

"*Edinburgh, May 6th*, 1850.

"Sir,—I have read the Ragged School Union Magazine for May with much interest.

"I cannot bear to think that the spurious arguments against Ragged Schools, which disfigure the columns of the *Morning Chronicle*, could blind the understanding and harden the heart of the thinking and feeling people of England. If it could, your thorough refutation of it is an antidote to the poison. I call it *thorough*, for it not only *disproves* the *facts* of the Correspondent of the *Chronicle*, but it likewise successfully controverts the argument, or rather special pleading, reared upon this rotten foundation.

"It excites one's indignation to think that you have been called on to perform such a duty as this. Is our country so circumstanced that she can afford to allow obstacles to be wantonly cast in the way of the few among her sons who acknowledge, and are earnestly endeavouring to fulfil the heaven-imposed duty of actively caring about her forlorn and outcast children? Would the Correspondent of the *Morning Chronicle* deny education to these children? If not, how, when, and where would he have it administered? Will he exercise his genius on this matter, and put his own hand to the plough? This "Special Correspondent" has discovered a bugbear: query—How many of his other discoveries are bugbears likewise? Your exposure of him, in connection with Ragged Schools, suggests distrust concerning his entire observation and propounding. I think, Sir, that

the attack on Ragged Schools, which you have repelled, may, and therefore should be turned to advantage. It has created an opportunity for calling on the supporters of Ragged Schools, all over the kingdom, to combine and cause the subject to be thoroughly investigated. The mind of the legislature is now occupied with education and cognate subjects, and the care of the ragged boy must not be forgotten. I believe that such a proceeding would issue in the establishment of Ragged Schools wherever there are ragged children; and I think, moreover, that it would strengthen the hands of the noble, enlightened, and truly patriotic President of the London Ragged School Union, when he again asks Parliament—as I trust he soon will do—to grant a broad measure for the Emigration of children educated and trained in Ragged Schools. The interest I feel in the subject is my apology for having done more than simply thank you for the Magazine, and express my entire satisfaction with your refutation of the mischievous letter in the *Chronicle*.

"I am, Sir, your obedient Servant,

"G. BELL."

"*Secretary, Edinburgh Original Ragged School Association.*"

BRIEF ABSTRACT OF THE SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE RAGGED SCHOOL UNION, 1850.

THE Committee humbly desire to express their gratitude to Almighty God for the measure of prosperity that has attended the labours of the Society through another year.

Under all discouragements, they look back with satisfaction and great thankfulness to what has been accomplished—to the numerous friends who have been added to the cause, and the increasing efficacy of the instrumentality at work. They gratefully recur to the anniversaries of the Local Schools, at which Christians of various denominations have given in their adherence to the system of Ragged Schools, and borne an invariable testimony to their usefulness; also to associations in many of the large towns in England and Scotland, founded on principles similar to those of this Society, and effecting by similar means much real and permanent good.

The publication of a Monthly Magazine, in addition to the printed Reports of the Local Schools, render it unnecessary for the Committee to enter into lengthened details; but they cannot help referring to one instance of good accomplished, in the removal of so many boys and girls from the mire and dirt, the vice and poverty of Westminster, St. Giles's, Field Lane, and similar localities, to the salubrious, invigorating, and fertile shores of Australia. Of two hundred boys and young women sent out to the colonies from the various Ragged Schools during the last eighteen months, almost every one (as far as accounts have yet been received) is employed at good wages and doing well. The letters sent home by many of those rescued ones are such as to kindle a feeling of sincere gratitude in every heart not dead to sympathy. When the Committee remember what these children once were, and the miseries, temptations, and vices to which they were exposed, they cannot but regard their reformation and ultimate removal to the colonies, as an instance of good accomplished, even if none other existed, sufficient to recompense all their labours.

The Committee regret exceedingly, that owing to the rejection of their Noble Chairman's proposition in the House of Commons in July last, the Government could not be induced to make a second Grant towards sending out Ragged School Emigrants. An appeal has since been made to the public for funds for Emigration purposes, and the result has been that contributions have been received amounting to £1,229. Part of this sum has already been expended in sending out 27 boys—11 more are now waiting for ships. The number sent out from the schools up to this time is about 250, and in no instance have the Committee or those friends who assisted them, had reason to regret their well-timed liberality.

The necessity for a large Central Refuge, in which the eldest and best-behaved children from the Local Schools could be received and trained previous to emigrating, is still apparent to the Committee, but they have not yet succeeded in organizing such an establishment. A plan now under consideration may probably remove the necessity for such an institution, at least for the present; namely, to divide the metropolis into four districts, appoint an inspector, and establish one or more Industrial Schools for each; such schools to be managed by district committees, and to be open for the reception of children from the Ragged Schools in the district, but under certain restrictions, and upon payment of a specified amount, either by the Local School or the Central Society. By this arrangement several of the Industrial Schools now existing would be brought into more active operation, and made more extensively useful. In no district would any new building be at present required for this purpose, except in Spitalfields, where one is about to be erected, and to which the Committee have voted the amount collected by them towards an Eastern Refuge.

The Committee refer with satisfaction to a further increase in the number of Schools; the number added to the list during the year is 14. They now number 94 in all. The number of voluntary teachers is 1,350; the children on week days, 5,174; week evenings, 5,093; Sunday evenings, 10,366. The number of paid teachers is now 156. The scholars in the Industrial Classes about 1,200. The amount in Special Grants made during the past year is £856; Continuous Grants, (promised and paid yearly,) £587; Occasional Payments to Schools, £195; Amount spent for Purchase of Bibles, sold to the children at 6*d.* each, £80. The Annual Subscriptions, which last year were £338, now amount to £520. The Donations (not including the Fund raised for Emigration, and a Legacy of £1,000, left by the late James Grant, Esq.) amount to £1,631. These statements, taken in conjunction with the many encouraging facts to be found in the pages of the Magazine, and the Reports of the Local Schools, leave the Committee no room to doubt, that the Society is still enjoying the confidence of a discerning and Christian public.

PROCEEDINGS AT THE SIXTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE RAGGED SCHOOL UNION,

Held in Exeter Hall, on Tuesday Evening, May 14th, 1850.

LONG before the hour announced for the commencement of the Meeting, the spacious hall was densely crowded; every entrance to it being thronged with eager applicants for admission, great numbers of whom, however, were compelled to retire. Shortly after six o'clock the Chair was taken by Lord KINNAIRD, in the absence of Lord ASHLEY, who had not then arrived.

A Hymn was then sung—

"All hail the power of Jesus' name."

At its conclusion Lord Ashley arrived, and took his place in the Chair.

The Rev. GEORGE FISK having offered up Prayer, the NOBLE CHAIRMAN rose and said: Ladies and gentlemen, I owe you an apology for my late arrival at this Meeting. The truth is, I was wholly unable to leave the House of Commons, being detained by two very important divisions. As soon as they were concluded, I came with the utmost possible speed; and now I have arrived in time, I am happy to say, to open the proceedings. Now, you see the Ragged School Union is erect and flourishing. (Hear, hear.) We have experienced some very rough assaults, but we are not cast to the ground; and I am inclined to think, that what we have undergone has been rather in the nature of friction, which has given us a polish, than in the nature of a blow that has caused an irreparable injury. (Hear, hear.) Now, the numbers in which you are assembled here to-day, and the numbers who are waiting to be admitted, give us every encouragement, and assure us of continued countenance and support. I will not enter into controversy now, because your presence here in such a vast multitude assures me that you are not changed—that you have not been turned from your former favourable opinion. (Hear, hear.) Therefore, I will not endeavour to combat the remarks which have been made against us, for you yourselves, by your presence here, declare them to be unworthy of your notice. The Report will show you, I hope, increasing success, and will develop many instances in which we have been enabled, by God's blessing, to bring many of these unfortunate children within the light and liberty of the Gospel. But let us, for one moment, consider what are our resources, and in what manner we shall proceed. Now, I do think that, when we undertake this cause—seeing the enormous evils that prevail—seeing the great mischiefs that are desolating this metropolis and other large towns of the kingdom—seeing that there are a vast number of these wild and lawless children, knowing neither their duty to God nor to man, thousands and tens of thousands whose hands are against every man, and, it may be said, every man's hand against them—seeing these enormous multitudes, and knowing they are the seed-plots of much of the vice and violence that desolate the community—I say, that when we address ourselves to the remedy of this great evil, and find ourselves either thwarted or coldly supported, we have a right to say to those who will not work with us, "Will you, or will you not, do anything on your part that shall remove so great and so acknowledged an evil?" Now, if they will do nothing, let them at once avow it; and if they will do something, let them disclose what that something is. (Hear, hear.) But, meanwhile, we will do all that in us lies, by God's blessing, to counteract the mischief. Our efforts are weak, we know, and the results imperfect; but, nevertheless, they are the only efforts that are made—the only results that can be obtained; and if you reject our efforts you must reject the whole, and leave the evil to infest and desolate the community, unchecked and uncared-for. But, however, I do not think that our efforts are fairly tested, in respect of the difficulties we have to encounter, or in respect of the good that we have been enabled to achieve. I do not wish to speak with harshness of the sister country, but there can be no doubt that a very great proportion of the difficulty that stands in our way arises from the constant influx of Irish children from the sister island. No sooner have we cleared away one mass

of sin and pollution, than we are overwhelmed by a fresh inundation. It seems that we have an impossible and a hopeless task, and it would be a hopeless task to any but those who go on in faith and fear nothing, knowing that it is their duty to persevere, and to leave the events to the pleasure of Almighty God. (Hear, hear.) Then, again, we should consider that the good we have achieved is not that kind of good that can appear in tabular statements, because a vast proportion of it has been in the actual *prevention* of crime, (Hear, hear,) and in preventing that crime from appearing in the tables and registries, which, without our efforts, would have swelled the frightful catalogue to a terrible amount; therefore, our results appear in some measure to be negative. It is difficult for us to hold out to the world at large the beneficial results we have achieved; but we rely upon those who are best acquainted with the state of this metropolis, and with the condition of this particular class, to persevere, and to come forward time by time and declare, that without efforts such as these, the state of the metropolis would have been such as would have defied not only the Ragged School Union, but the very Government of these realms, to contend with, with any prospect of success. (Cheers.) It is stated very frequently, that certain children who have been examined have declared that they trace their fall to the intercourse they met with in the Ragged School. That is a very serious proposition, and one that, falling upon inexperienced minds, may cause them to think that there is a great deal of truth in the statement. But I observe that, in all cases where evidence of this sort is adduced, no proof whatever is given that any effort was made to ascertain how long those parties had been in a Ragged School, (Hear, hear,) whether they had not been dismissed for bad conduct, or whether they had ever been in a Ragged School at all; and that is the condition of a vast number. They say they have been in a Ragged School, because they know that it gives a certain sort of interest to their statements. A large proportion of such children have never been to a Ragged School; a large proportion have stayed but a very few days; and a few—I am happy to say a very few—have been dismissed for bad conduct. We have, therefore, a right to demand, that whenever a charge of this kind is made against the system of Ragged Schools, the party making this charge should be able to prove that his evidence is sound evidence, and that he speaks of things with which he is acquainted. (Hear, hear.) After all, look at the mighty good that has been effected. The good that has been done is real good, and permanent good; and if you doubt it, examine the records of all those who have been placed out in situations by the aid of this Society; examine the letters and narratives of those who have emigrated to her Majesty's colonies, and you will tell us that very great good, far exceeding the scanty means placed at our disposal, has been effected upon these wild and lawless children. I know very well that the good is not at all in proportion to the necessity, but that fault is not ours—it is *yours*; it is your fault for not supporting us. I shall not detain you by any lengthened observations, because there are other speakers to follow, and it is desirable that in this temperature we should be able to separate as soon as possible. Consider what will be the result of your withdrawing your support from this Society—of 15,000 children, now within our schools, being turned loose again upon the streets, and not receiving that scanty education and care that, by God's blessing, we are enabled to give them—scanty in proportion to what we wish to do; but, thank God, a very great measure in respect of the results that have been operating upon the minds and hearts of many of them. And when you know all that has been produced by these efforts, I do think you will shrink from the responsibility of withdrawing your support; nay, that you will use redoubled efforts, until you shall be enabled to overcome this enormous amount of spiritual evil. But if you do persevere—if every one in this room would put his shoulder to the wheel—if every lady that I see here would make herself the centre of influence—the means of a collection, a teacher, or, it may be, a founder of a Ragged School—this room, with the blessing of God, contains enough of zeal, energy, principle, and I dare say of wealth, to enable us to establish Ragged Schools in every quarter of this enormous metropolis. It is a great and

glorious work; it is worthy of your best energies in every aspect. It is worthy of your energies if you look upon it only as a political question—as a means of preserving the peace of this kingdom; it is worthy of your highest energies, if you look upon it as a work in the service of your Lord and Master. Go to the work, remembering the truth of God's holy word, "Heaviness may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." (Loud applause.)

Mr. W. Locke, the Hon. Secretary, then read the Annual Report and the Treasurer's Account.

The Earl of Harrowby moved,—

"That the Report now read be adopted, and the names (according to the printed list) be the Managing Committee and Officers for the ensuing year."

He believed that Ragged Schools were now, for the first time, put upon their defence, and he conceived it to be a good sign that they had been attacked; for if they had not been doing a great deal of good, and making a great stir, they would not have excited the opposition which had lately arisen. It was not only a sign that they had done a great deal, but he trusted it was an augury that they were going to achieve still more. Nothing was so beneficial for a good work as to be put a little upon the defensive: it stirred up the energy of lukewarm friends, and excited those who were more energetic and vigilant to increased exertions. The crime laid to their charge was, that by collecting bad and good boys together from the streets, they contaminated the latter without mending the former. This charge was founded upon the most dubious evidence. The first class of evidence was statistical. Men frequently argued that things coincident were related as cause and effect. Figures and facts alike required the closest investigation, for both were capable of being turned any way. Many things might coincide with crime—changes in the legislation, changes in seasons, and changes in trade—to any of which, without investigation, might be attributed a co-existent fact. Unless, therefore, we knew more than that two facts co-exist, we had not advanced one step towards their solution. Apparently there had been an increase of crime amongst the juvenile population in this city—a city exposed to all kinds of fluctuations in employment, in population, and in other matters bearing most materially on the increase of crime. There had been a large increase of the poor Irish population in the lower parts of the city, spreading misery and crime wherever they went. Were they, then, to lose sight of that fact, and attribute the crime to that which *a priori* might be supposed to produce the very reverse? For the purpose of showing that the increase of crime and the existence of Ragged Schools were related as cause and effect, one or two policemen, and four or five Ragged School boys were examined, and the conclusion arrived at was, that the boys were brought together in Ragged Schools, and corrupted one another. Now very much depended on the spirit with which the investigation was conducted. It was possible to put questions to the ignorant, the unenlightened, and the frightened, just in such a way as to elicit the very answers desired; and it seemed to be on evidence drawn from parties in this way that the writer in the *Morning Chronicle* had founded his conclusion. He saw, by the *Ragged School Union Magazine*, that the best possible means had been adopted of investigating these facts; they had gone to the parties who were examined, and had ascertained that their sentiments had been misrepresented; one policeman, indeed, positively stated that his testimony was just the reverse of that given in the *Morning Chronicle;* and, as regards the children, the conclusions drawn from their evidence were anything but those which they intended to convey. Now, to exaggerate everything which a man said against a system, and to leave out all he said in its favour, was certainly a most unfair method of procedure. One would think, from what had been said, that the only opportunity bad boys had of congregating together was in Ragged Schools. But where did these boys come from? From close and crowded alleys and houses, where every possible opportunity of association was forced upon them. But in these schools, instead of being brought together to curse, and swear, and fight, it was to be taught to read, and write, and to hear the word

of God. It was impossible to isolate them; they must be together; and the question was, whether they should be together for good or for evil. (Hear, hear.) It was not at all surprising that some of these Ragged School boys should be found in prisons. Were they taken from the most virtuous class? Were they collected, as choice flowers, from the metropolis? No! they were taken from the deepest possible depths; brought out thence with the darkest complexions of character; and was it surprising that they were not all whitened? Could they expect that 16,000 of the very poorest and worst of children, living in the worst of homes, and with the worst of parents, exposed to every possible temptation to crime—could they expect that none of these would fall? It was a blessing if they were not all in our prisons instead of a few. (Cheers.) [Here his Lordship read the testimony of several chaplains of prisons from the *Ragged School Union Magazine*, in favour of Ragged Schools, and contradicting the statements of the *Morning Chronicle*.] Of eighteen criminals, he said, in one prison, it was found that they came from fifteen different schools; it was ascertained, however, that their average attendance at them was only from three weeks to three months. Now, of course, an attendance of three weeks was not to change every criminal into a virtuous person; such a result could not be expected. But with reference to the children generally, it was thought that their parents would certainly be able to judge as to whether they were benefited or otherwise by their attendance at the Ragged Schools. Meetings were accordingly called in various places, to which hundreds of the parents eagerly flocked, and willingly testified to the great benefits which their children had received from their instruction at the Ragged Schools. There was one point which came out from the investigation, in which, perhaps, additional caution might be used—he referred to the quiet dispersal of the boys to their several homes. But let them not, in these little moats in the sunshine, forget the brightness of the light which the promoters of Ragged Schools had been spreading over some of the darkest parts of the metropolis. Let them not feel that these criticisms could in any way diminish the effect of that general chorus of approbation, in which the good men of all classes had joined, in favour of the wholesome operations of these benevolent and Christian schools. Let them not do anything to extinguish the bright lamp which had been shining in the darkness of night, but furnish it with oil to enable it to burn yet more brightly. (Loud applause.)

Lord KINNAIRD, in rising to second the Resolution, said, the vast attendance then present was a sufficient testimony of the support the Ragged School Union received from the inhabitants of this metropolis; and he conceived it did show that, where a man undertook an object on which he could hope for the Divine blessing, whatever difficulties might lie in his path, success would ultimately follow his exertions. Success had followed the efforts of the Ragged School Union in a most remarkable manner. In the first instance, it was a service of danger to open a Ragged School, and bring together those poor wretched outcasts, who had never in their lives been subject to the slightest control, and who came not to receive instruction, but to laugh and mock at those who opened the school. (Hear, hear.) Perhaps the first thing they did when they were assembled was to extinguish the lights, and throw stones; but visit the same school a few months afterwards, and those same children would be found on their knees, listening and joining in humble prayers to their Creator. If, in a short time, such an effect as that could be produced, that alone was enough to reward one for every exertion, and to give the lie to any statement that might be made, to the effect that the children instructed in Ragged Schools were being led into vice instead of being reclaimed. The chaplains of several jails had testified to the satisfactory effects that had appeared from the instruction given at those schools; but the advantages were more apparent in small than in large towns. In Aberdeen and Dundee the streets had been cleared of ragged children. While formerly there used always to be tried at the assizes some thirty every year, this last year there was not one case against a child under fourteen years of age, and the reports from the rural police represented that such a sight as a ragged child was exceedingly rare.

Could any look round on that vast assembly, and think that ragged children, to the extent of three times the number of persons there assembled, were under the care of that Society, and not believe that great good would result from bringing such a number of the most dissolute into order and peace? He himself could testify to the affection which the children often manifested towards each other. He knew scarcely anything more important than increasing the funds which had been established in connection with the Ragged School Union for the encouragement and promotion of Emigration. He believed that none could attend a Ragged School, and be acquainted with its operations, without feeling a deep interest in its welfare, and in the success of the endeavours being made to give the children the benefit of emigrating, when other lands opened up much brighter prospects to them than the land of their birth. (Applause.)

The Rev. GEORGE FISK supported the Resolution. He said: My Lord Ashley, Christian friends—It strikes me that if a more accurate knowledge of the necessity of the case existed, there might have been a less amount of opposition directed against this important work. I think, that if the character and habits of that most important class of the community which we desire to benefit had been thoroughly understood, and that had been the result of personal communication with them, there would have been, instead of an attack upon so important a work, a spirit of large and charitable co-operation. As to the results of Ragged School instruction, I would appeal, my Lord, to the experience, not only of one so well versed in this matter as yourself, but to the experience of everyone who has taken the trouble to see the working of a Ragged School—a Ragged School in which the true class of children has been brought under kindly influence—a Ragged School in which discipline has been brought to bear with all that exactness, and all that practical wisdom, which characterise the truly Christian teacher. I may, perhaps, refer to one particular Ragged School, with which I am acquainted, in which, not merely has the kindliness of Christianity, not merely the spiritual-mindedness which Christianity produces, been brought to bear upon the children, but that tact (I can find no other word but that to express it) has been acquired, which manifests itself in understanding the mode in which a truly ragged boy thinks, the mode in which he is accustomed to act, and the language by which he is accustomed to express the processes of his mind; for the processes of mind of a Ragged School boy, one who has been accustomed from his infancy to live by his wits, are very remarkable, and often very powerful. Those who would question the importance of our work, those who would endeavour to throw obstacles in the way of the success we look for, might themselves acquire a keener wit by a wise and judicious intercourse with Ragged School children. The first time I stood up to address a Ragged School, I was quite astonished. The children were just caught, but certainly not tamed. There they stood, every countenance exhibiting a dread-naught front—an expression implying, "Who are you, Sir?" "What are you come for?" "What are you going to tell us?" and "Are we not as good as you?" Every countenance, more or less, betokened a quickness of susceptibility and feeling, and that decision of character which makes me say, as the result of some experience, that ragged children are one of the most promising classes of the community. Only let the Ragged School lad have his chance, be treated with kindness, gentleness, and compassion; let the orphan ragged boy feel that a father's heart vibrates towards him, and a mother's tenderness hovers over and seeks to guide him; let a boy accustomed to live by his wits know that there are others, intelligent, wise, good, holy people, determined to care for him, determined before God that he shall be cared for—then I say the ragged boy will yield a rich harvest of good deeds, as the result of the spirit of eternal truth acting upon his heart. (Cheers.) I am rather inclined to praise God for the opposition we have met with, and take courage. I have lived long enough as a Christian man and minister to know that, unless my work be graced by sincerity of intention, by earnestness of purpose, prayerfulness and assiduity, in humble dependence on the grace of God in every step of my way, Satan will not trouble me; but the moment I am per-

severingly on my knees—the moment I determine to give myself, soul and body, to the service of God—the moment I want to have the Spirit of God upon the work, and the impress of the Bible upon every one with whom I come in contact—then, the more I expect of opposition; and in every sound of opposition would I hail the approbation of Him who will sustain me, even until the end! My Lord, I do feel that our Ragged School movement is one result betokening abundant answer to the prayers of our pious forefathers. It is a remarkable fact, which was impressed strongly on my mind as the noble Lord Harrowby was addressing this Meeting, that this and kindred institutions are not the product of the prayerful labour of our fathers in Christian community, but the product of the prayer and labour of young Christians. There is a body of young and devoted Christian men and women connected with our Ragged School work; there are young and energetic Christians who are members of the Central Committee; I am delighted from time to time to meet young and earnest hearts in my own Ragged School Committee, and I look upon the Ragged School movement as one of the proofs that the prayers offered by our Simeons, our Newtons, and our Cecils, were not unheard, but have left behind them a seed, and a spiritual population, who are doing the work and preparing for the work for which they prayed, and watched, and waited. There has been a going forth of Christian hearts with prayerful assiduity, into places which vice and misery have long kept dark. Christian tenderness and love have found out the locality which our forefathers never would have surmised; and now the calamity is developed, their spiritual children are dealing with and endeavouring to rectify it. My Lord, I look upon the Report which has been read to this Meeting as indicating a most delightful instalment of success; and sure am I, that if we live to see another anniversary, that instalment will be greatly increased; and the spirit of opposition will be found to have braced up Christian sinews, and strengthened Christian hearts in prayer before the throne of grace. It is a good thing that this institution has been publicly arraigned. It has been put on its trial; it has had skilful advocates in those noble Lords who have addressed this Meeting. I am rejoiced to feel that we have a noble jury before whom the case may be presented—a jury of Christian intelligence. They may tell us it is a packed jury; and, (looking at the crowded assemblage around him,) and so it is. (Laughter and cheers.) And were Exeter Hall twice the size, it would be packed then. (Hear, hear.) We put the matter to the good sense and Christianity of this large jury; and now we wait—not for any elaborate summing-up—we put the misfortunes of this unfortunate culprit before the jury, we put the small unboasted well-doings of this culprit before it, and I do hope we shall hear, in a voice of thunder, from this Meeting, the true honest verdict, "Not guilty of the charge." (Loud applause.)

The Resolution was put, and carried by acclamation.

The Rev. J. ALDIS moved the second Resolution:—

"That this Meeting desires to express devout thankfulness to Almighty God for the marked and encouraging success that has hitherto attended the efforts of the Society, and for the blessings conferred by the Ragged Schools on the poor and neglected youth of this vast metropolis."

He said: My Lord, I feel the most entire sympathy with the spirit and sentiments of this Resolution. The great principle it embodies is, that the operations of this Society are evangelical in their spirit, in their basis, and in the ground of their hope. We are philanthropists, and would promote the social welfare of mankind; we are patriots, and wish to promote the welfare of our country; we are citizens of London, and wish to promote the welfare of the city; but, pre-eminently, we would feel that we are Christians, and we wish to diffuse Christian influence abroad. It is because the truths of the Gospel are to be brought to bear upon the minds of these children in the Ragged Schools, and that, by the grace of the Spirit that gave that Gospel, we hope their hearts will be changed, that I for one have entire confidence in the principle, the basis, the progress, and the ultimate triumph of the good work in which we are engaged. Apart from that I should

feel doubtful as to whether our position be sound and safe; but in connection with it, I have no such doubt. I feel, that in giving the blessings of our holy religion we are giving unmixed good, whatever others may apprehend. If I teach men in a secular point of view mere self-respect, I may make them proud; if I teach them prudence, I may make them selfish; if I give them merely secular instruction, I may succeed in making them more adroit in crime; but if I am the instrument of communicating knowledge in connection with gospel convictions, while I exalt the understanding I clothe them with humility; and while I bless them for time present, I bless them for time in its utmost range. (Applause.) Still, I feel that the principle of the Society, being the evangelical principle of teaching God's truth as the means of blessing God's creatures, that that will in itself be necessarily trustful. Evangelical mercy believes, and loves, and acts; therefore is it mighty.—

"It holds no parley with unmanly fears,
Where duty bids, it confidently steers;
Faces a thousand dangers at its call,
And, trusting in its God, surmounts them all."

I know there are some persons who pride themselves on their intelligence; they start doubts, propose questions, exaggerate difficulties, predict defeat. They tell us we shall do more mischief than good; they tell us they are wiser than we: I think them colder hearted. The world's prudence may defend them; Christian charity will never bless them. In contradistinction to that, let us remember that in every work of mercy there will be some danger—there always will be many difficulties. It has been so from the beginning; we need not expect that it should be otherwise in reference to ourselves. Only let us feel that when our Divine Master came, even his mission of mercy unsheathed the sword, and kindled the flame. Let us feel, too, that the work of mercy is a work of necessity; it must be done. The ignorant must be instructed, the down-trodden uplifted, the outcast gathered in. We have long enough had the heathen's maxim—

"Fiat justitia, ruat cœlum."
"Let justice be done, though the heavens fall."

Let us now adopt the Christian's maxim —mercy. Let us have mercy, whatever be the fears of the timid, or the denunciations of the hostile. I feel, that not only blind self-interest and wilful prejudice, but cold reason and timid prudence, will see difficulty and danger, and be seriously apprehensive of calamity. For myself, I will hold on my way. When our Divine Master came, he claimed obedience and faith. The Jews said, "He will take away our place and nation;" the learned Greeks said, "He will destroy philosophy and the arts;" and the superstitious multitude said, "The land would be filled with atheism." But, after all, the world is all the better for being by these means turned upside down. Europe years ago was founded and worked by serfs; Christism benevolence said, "Let the slaves go free;" the world said, "That insubordination and lawlessness would prevail throughout the land." But the slaves were set at liberty; and is not Europe with its freemen, better than Africa with all its slaves? (Cheers.) Not long ago, it was said, "Let the masses be educated." Men objected that it would be the precursor of impiety towards God and disobedience towards man; but the work was done, and now it is generally acknowledged that the education of the masses is not only essential to their dignity, but to their usefulness. Not long ago a mitigation of the penal code was advocated; men said this would loosen the bonds of law, and tend to increase crime. But the fact is, men have been taught reverence towards the law, while they have been taught to appreciate mercy. So it will be for ever; but believing in God's truth, I fear nothing. I look sometimes with anxiety on the prospect of our country, whither we are drifting, and what will be the result of the influences at present at work. Thus much I see; everywhere superstition urges her demands, insists upon obedience, and infidelity noiselessly strides on. What, then, is the position Christian men should take? Let them look at the example of the sinless Jesus, whose disciples we profess to be, whose word we profess to trust, and by whose law we are not only bound, but willing to act. He came to save the lost, and to rescue the down-trodden and depraved. No Christian man can hesitate to follow that example. It is very true that a storm threatens to come on; many say the ship is not strong; we

know she is not new; but the example of Jesus is our compass. Let us all resolve to steer by it; and then, though the winds are wild, and the breakers roar, and the billows swell, and the tempest causes the poor ship to quiver like a shaken reed, we cannot but go on to the haven of righteousness and peace. Under such guidance, failure is an impossibility; and with such a conviction, anything short of constancy in our duty would be contradictory to the principles we profess to entertain. I only trust that the conviction that this is a work of mercy, in dependence on the Divine help for ultimate success, may take possession of every mind; and then I am right sure that all those who toil in Ragged Schools week after week, so carefully, so assiduously, and amid so many difficulties and discouragements, will go on their way mindful of Him whose servants they are, and from whom they shall receive their reward.

The Rev. P. B. POWER seconded the Resolution. He said: I scarcely know whether it be right to admit the Meeting into the secrets of the platform, but it may be as well to say, that I have been requested by Mr. Locke, our excellent Secretary, to say very little on a matter on which already a great deal has been said. Now, although Mr. Locke comes from our sister country, I do believe he has a truly English heart, and that he is unwilling to see a man trampled upon when, by the acknowledgment of all, he is fairly down. It is with very great pleasure I turn to the immediate object of the Resolution which has been committed to me to second. The Resolution, in showing a spirit of thankfulness to Almighty God, for the putting forth of his Spirit, and enabling us to accomplish such great results as unquestionably have been achieved, recognises, first of all, our own insufficiency. All who have taken a part in the work of Ragged School teaching, whether it be in the management of the Society, or whether it be in the actual teaching of the children themselves, fairly acknowledge that they are placed in so difficult a position, and have to cope with such rough and hard materials, that if left to their own insufficiency, and their own ability, they could do nothing at all; and herein, my Lord, lies the very secret of our strength. Ragged Schools have admirably adapted themselves to the work they have had to accomplish, and I hope that their present name will be continued till the class for which they are designed is raised in society, and there are no more miserable outcasts to be gathered into them. So, likewise, I trust Ragged Schools will always remain in the neighbourhoods, however low, where they are most required, and not be put in places where ragged boys will not venture. I would speak one word concerning the nature of the objects for whom these particular schools are designed. They are neglected youths, and, therefore, liable to temptation and bad association. It is all very well to say that poverty is a state in which man can be very contented and happy. It is very true, if we have the blessing of God on our hearts and on our work, we shall be contented though poor; but poverty is a state peculiarly liable to temptation; and these poor children are exposed to evil and adverse influences, of which the children of the rich, the noble, and the great, know nothing. If it were nothing but the evil association and the bad companionship in which they engage, and which meet them at every turn, that of itself were enough to keep them down to the low state in which they are. Who can possibly tell the difficulty which surrounds a ragged boy, when he tries (if he ever does) to burst himself away from the evil associations with which he has mixed? Where is he to go? Who will stretch out a kindly hand and do anything for him? Let us remember the solemn fact, that Ragged School boys are outcasts from the better ranks of society. Now, the benefits that are being conferred by means of these Ragged Schools and the Ragged School Union upon these children are inestimably great. I may mention one which it is very important for this Meeting to take into account, and that is, that in many instances these children have received from the Ragged School a certain amount of character. (Hear, hear.) Without character a man is nothing; and it is better to receive such a character as the Ragged School can give than not to receive any at all. (Hear, and cheers.) It is considered, let what will be said to the contrary, and it ought to be so, that when a boy has for a certain length of time conducted himself well in a school, and under the eyes of Christian

men, even though that school be a Ragged School, and those teachers be Ragged School teachers—it is considered that the testimony of those men, who can have no interest in misrepresentation, is worth something, and confers some character upon this miserable outcast of a boy. And this we well know to be a fact, that in many instances these children have, through the characters they have received from their teachers, been enabled to get into some place where they can earn their livelihood honestly, while before they were left to beg, if not to steal. Another benefit, my Lord, which these children have received from us is, that they have become more energetic. Who has ever done anything to make these children energetic for good? No one; and the consequence is, that the moral principle is, as it were, prostrated in their hearts; but in many and many a case it has, by the influence of the Holy Spirit, and the instrumentality of this Society, been introduced into their hearts, and they have gone on their way rejoicing, no longer the poor spiritless beings they were, but having received an impulse which began on earth, but which I know shall end in heaven. But I would say one word on the benefit which has been conferred on the poor parents of these Ragged School children. I cannot, my Lord, imagine a more melancholy sight, than that poor ragged child's mother, looking upon her boy or her girl, perhaps asleep in the dead of the night, and pondering in her mind what shall become of her. Perhaps it is some poor widow, left destitute and desolate, her heart torn and wrung by being separated from all she loved best on earth—perhaps, my Lord, it may be some poor helpless mother, whose husband has been torn from her on account of his own career of crime—and then, as she beholds the pale moon-beams play on the face of her sleeping child, and thinks of what will become of that child—oh! what fearful forebodings and surmisings must rise up in her mind! Perhaps she sees evil in the vision of that boy—perhaps she sees his brow contract as he plans some villany for the morrow. Perhaps as she looks on her poor girl, she dreads her unprotected state, and thinks of her as lost to society, dishonoured and cast down, perhaps never to rise again. Oh! my Lord, let us remember that we have done something, and let us determine that we will do much more. (Applause.) If these children be the worms of society, grovelling in its very dust, and if there be some that would crush them, let them think that they may be, not the worms but the glow-worms of the earth, emitting a glorious light to those who come to them. Oh! let us go on in faithfulness and earnestness, remembering that possibly there is committed to us the great and noble task of rescuing this class from reprobation, misery, and from woe. Where the arm of justice cannot reach, let us remember that the hand of mercy can penetrate, to upraise, to elevate, and to bless. Where that hand of justice, if it could reach, would be but to manacle and to fetter, it is a part of Christian philanthropy and mercy to strike the fetters from their minds, and to bid them "Go and sin no more." Our talent is committed to us not to slay, but to keep alive; not to cast down, but to raise. We know, my Lord, that the same mass of iron that by one man's hand is cast into the deadly bomb-shell, or made into the glittering steel of the murderer's knife, can be, by another man's hand, made into the noble sheet-anchor, which can keep the ship from drifting to her ruin, or into the ploughshare, which subdues the earth to man's wants. We put ourselves forth, not as the executioners, but the physicians of society. Let us show that we can extract the most precious balm and essence from even the most deadly herbs—that we can meet the father of mischief, even in his worst spells, and counteract them by the application of the Gospel, and that the mischief of iniquity can be disenchanted by the cross. (Loud applause.)

The Resolution was supported by JOSEPH PAYNE, Esq., who said, that he considered himself an old friend of the Society, as that was the ninety-ninth Ragged School Meeting in which he had taken a part. (Cheers.) Though he could not put a new face upon the matter, he was enabled, by the kindness of his Ragged School friends, to appear in a new dress upon the occasion. He was an illustration of the practical effects of the movement from head to foot. (Laughter.) He had on his feet a beautiful pair of boots, the work and the present of twenty reformed thieves. The letter that had been sent him with that

present had gone forth to the public, and, he believed, had done more to make friends for the Ragged School Union than the best speeches and sermons that had been delivered on the subject. He had also in his possession a beautifully made pocket-book, the production of the boys in the Westminster Juvenile Refuge. He had, too, a waistcoat, made by the girls in the Industrial Class of the Field Lane Ragged School; and a cap, made in the same school, which he waved with great zeal, when their reverend friend, Mr. Fisk, required a verdict at their hands. (Laughter, and cheers.) He had not seen so crowded and spirited a Meeting since he stood in that hall some years ago, at the commencement of the Early Closing Movement—a Meeting with the present Prime Minister in the Chair; and he could not but see a strong and intimate connection between that Meeting and the present. He believed, that the young men and the young women who had been benefited by that movement had been the foremost in helping on the Ragged School cause, being determined that they who are freed should assist in the work of freeing others. The speaker denominated the Ragged School Union a "Pulling-up-by-the-roots Society," a "Looking-every-way Society," a "Sending-to-the-fountain Society," and a "Real-blessing-to-mothers Society," humorously substantiating the grounds of these several titles by the narration of various illustrative anecdotes. The Ragged School Society, he said, looked backward for encouragement, around for information, forward for incitement, and upward for support. Mr. Payne then read the following lines, which he had composed on the attack made on Ragged Schools by Mr. Mayhew in the *Morning Chronicle*:—

"May you be taught, may you be fed;
May you in wisdom's ways be led;
May you be happy night and day,
In spite of all Mayhew can say.

"May you from filthy homes be free;
May you improving parents see;
May you grow wise, and good, and strong,
Till Mayhew owns that he was wrong."

(Laughter, and cheers.) The speaker concluded his address by reciting some lines, evincing his continued attachment to the Ragged School cause.

The Resolution was then put, and passed unanimously.

A Collection was then made, which amounted to the sum of £94. 14*s*.

The Rev. JOHN BRANCH said: I rise, my Lord, to move—

"That the Committee be encouraged to persevere in their efforts, notwithstanding the opposition and adverse influences against which they may have had to contend; and that it is the duty of all professing Christians to unite in helping forward this great and good work."

It surely will not be necessary, my Lord, that I should say anything at this late hour in support of such a Resolution as this, either to convince your Lordship or the Meeting of my adherence to the interests of Ragged Schools. I have so frequently attended meetings with yourself and your constituents throughout the year, that it is really only necessary that I should make my appearance here to-night, to testify my unabating and untiring zeal in this great and good work. Something is due, however, to your Lordship from the Society to which I have the honour to belong. If I could have had my wish, I should have got my esteemed friend, Mr. Robinson, the Secretary to the City Mission, to have taken this Resolution. I have but to repeat what was publicly stated here some time since, that the Committee of the London City Mission took up the cause of Ragged Schools in their infancy. My Lord, Ragged Schools and City Mission efforts have grown up together. The simple matter of fact was this, the City Missionary found not only adults living in ignorance and sin, in filth and mental degradation, but he found a mass of children growing up around him, the boys making expert thieves, and the poor girls driven to a life of infamy at fourteen or fifteen years of age. He found, moreover, this unfortunate class in rags and filth. He could not obtain admission for them into any decent school, and hence the necessity and the origin of Ragged Schools. If you want thoroughly to understand the class of children who come within the operations of this Society, you must not only go to the Ragged Schools where they are congregated together, but you must go and see them in their dens of infamy at home, in the court, the alley, the cellar, and the garret, and there see, as I have

seen, fifteen juvenile thieves, the oldest of whom was not more than sixteen years of age, governed by a captain of twenty-two years old, sent out upon their nightly patrol, and living upon the better classes of society. My Lord, I would say to tradespeople—If you want to maintain your homes in peace, and to retain your property in your possession, encourage Ragged Schools, for if they had never done more than this, they have, at least, brought together a multitude of wicked children, who, while they have been thus congregated, have been kept from pillaging your shops and your houses. Let me say, with regard to the friction to which your Lordship has made allusion to-night, that I believe it will do us good. This overwhelming Meeting to-night has come to your Lordship's aid, to tell you that whatever has been said against the Ragged School Union has but quickened their pulse in its favour. The juvenile thieves of London, my Lord, are a class of youth extremely quick of perception. One of them, in the east of London, said to me not long ago, alluding to Mr. Mayhew, "He is a very clever writer, sir, but he is rather green at this work." I as much believe that those boys whom Mr. Mayhew examined, gave their answers in the hope of getting a shilling out of a man with a decent coat on his back, as I believe that I stand here to-night. I know that in three instances the very boys denied what they had said to Mr. Mayhew five minutes after he left the place. The fact is, you cannot depend upon the statements made by a class of individuals like this. My Lord, just one word to the young friends around us to-night, to those who go out to teach. I am very glad to see your Lordship again and again in the Chair, keeping the field against the great enemy of mankind; and I am extremely glad to meet other Lords upon the platform to-night, but your Lordship knows that our great strength is not in the generals, but in the soldiers. We have to depend upon the laborious exertions of those young men and young women, Sunday after Sunday, and week after week. And what I have said before, I must repeat to-night—if we have no Mrs. Frys, no Howards—if we have no giants, my Lord, it is because we have no dwarfs. Our churches are not sleeping—our members are up and doing. The work of teaching, and saving, and blessing, is not confined to the pulpit, but has got into the pew; it is not confined to the minister, but all Christ's faithful soldiers are now expected to fight Christ's battles; it is now as much the work of the pew as of the pulpit, to go out in this mission of love. I believe that England's safety and prosperity depend upon what we do for the masses around us. The continent of Europe has taught us a lesson. Blessed be God, while all was commotion and misrule abroad, we were enjoying peace and happiness at home. They have no Ragged Schools in France; they have no City Missions in France; they have no trusting bands of men and women, who, whatever the world says against them, go out and fearlessly drag these children from the kennels, and teach them the way of life. One of the blessed signs of the times are our Ragged School Teachers, who go out to do those good who will not come to receive good. My Lord, I have great pleasure in moving this Resolution. I am one of those who believe that the Bible education given to our children in the Ragged Schools will be one of the greatest blessings of the times in which we live. Let our children have a little education, and let it be known, my Lord, throughout the length and breadth of the land, aye, and in the honourable House to which your Lordship belongs, that whatever desire the people of this land may have to elevate the mental condition of the masses, they love Christ, and will not submit to any education without giving them the religion of Christ with it. Let Ragged Schools do this in an unostentatious, constant, and steady manner, taking the Bible as their only guide. Do this, and you will prove that your efforts are worthy the combined labours of all who love Christ, to whatever denomination they may belong; you will do more to bind Christian men and women together, than all that can be said upon platforms, or in pamphlets. All that can be said upon Christian union will never effect a tithe of the benefit that is accomplished when men and women go to work for the Lord Jesus Christ. My Lord, I most cordially move the adoption of this Resolution.

Lord WALDEGRAVE, in seconding the Resolution, expressed the interest he felt in the operations of the Ragged School

Union, and the pleasure he felt in assisting in the Christian work, in behalf of which the last speaker had so eloquently addressed them.

Captain HOLLAND, R.N., in moving the next Resolution, said it was some few years since he first became acquainted with the Ragged School movement, through the Noble Lord in the Chair, and he took that opportunity publicly to thank his Lordship for the interest he then felt, and had ever since evinced in that movement. He thought a great deal of misapprehension existed as to the state of the class they were trying to reclaim. He had had some experience with that class, and he was convinced that the present attempt was the only one that had ever been successful, or that was likely to be successful, in reaching the necessities of the case. They must follow in the footsteps of our blessed Lord, in looking for, and searching out those who, but for that effort, would be lost. The Resolution he had the honour and pleasure of proposing was,

"That the thanks of this Meeting, and of all true friends to the poor, are due to the Right Hon. Lord Ashley, for his increasing efforts in support of Ragged Schools, and for his kindness in presiding this evening."

He called on all present to join cordially to pass that Resolution, and also to prove their sympathy in the matter, by taking a deeper interest, and using more vigorous means to secure the continued prosperity of the great work. (Loud applause.)

J. DEAN PAUL, Esq., seconded the Resolution, and expressed his solemn conviction, that there was no work in which they could engage that would be more profitable to their own souls than in teaching ragged children; he believed it was a work to which they were specially called by the injunction of our Lord, "Go ye into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in." He congratulated the Noble Chairman in being engaged in such a work.

The Resolution was then put, and passed by acclamation.

After a reply from his Lordship, the Doxology was sung, and the benediction having been pronounced by the Rev. J. Sherman, the Meeting terminated shortly before half-past nine o'clock.

THE COLLECTION.

As on a former occasion, we now subjoin an Analysis of the Collection at the Annual Meeting, comparing it with that of the previous year. In the present instance, we leave our readers to draw their own inferences:—

May 15th, 1849.

	£.	s.	d.
COPPER—			
470 halfpence and farthings	0	18	11½
345 pence	1	8	9
SILVER—			
49 threepenny pieces	0	12	3
413 fourpenny pieces	6	17	8
933 sixpences	23	6	6
717 shillings	35	17	0
111 crowns and half-crowns	14	5	0
GOLD—			
13 half-sovereigns	6	10	0
8 sovereigns	8	0	0
Total for 1849	£97	16	1½

May 14th, 1850.

	£.	s.	d.
COPPER—			
455 halfpence and farthings	0	18	7
367 pence	1	10	7
SILVER—			
48 threepenny pieces	0	12	0
394 fourpenny pieces	6	11	4
844 sixpences	21	2	0
702 shillings	35	2	0
138 crowns and half-crowns	17	7	6
GOLD—			
5 half-sovereigns	2	10	0
9 sovereigns	9	0	0
Total for 1850	£94	14	0

WESTMINSTER JUVENILE REFUGE.

THE Annual Meeting of this Institution was held in Willis's Rooms, King Street, St. James's, on Tuesday, April 23rd, 1850, the Rt. Hon. Lord Ashley, M.P., in the Chair. The Report stated, that of the number now in the institution, six are orphans, thirty-five are fatherless, twenty are motherless, thirty-nine have both parents living, three have fathers transported, nine were in prison before they came to the school. The Refuge embraces—1st, A school for eighty boys, from eight to sixteen years of age.—2nd, A school for fifty girls of the same age.—3rd, A school for thirty girls and young women.—4th, A school for thirty youths and young men. During the past year, four other lads have been apprenticed, who also, with one exception, are giving satisfaction to their masters. Three youths have recently gone to Australia as shepherd boys, or to make themselves generally useful, regarding whom the shipping agents, in a note to the Secretary, say:—"They do infinite credit to those under whose care and instruction they have been placed, and to whose respectable appearance and good behaviour on board the 'Duke of Portland,' we bear willing testimony." The whole of the children in the Refuge are taught either to make their own shoes, or clothes; the first result, therefore, of their labour is their own personal improvement. The formation of good habits is the object sought, and not the production of any particular craftsman.

CAMDEN TOWN RAGGED AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS.

THE Annual Meeting of this Institution was held at the Music Hall, Store Street, Lord Ashley in the Chair. The Report stated, that from the period when the schools were opened 300 boys had been admitted, and the average attendance had been exceedingly good; the ages of the children being from fifteen months to twelve years. Their moral conduct had been most satisfactory. In the juvenile department of the girls' school 160 children had been admitted, at the same ages as the boys. Their manners had been good, and their conduct most creditable. They were instructed in needlework in the evening. About eighty boys' names were registered in the books, and between thirty and forty generally attended The number which composed the girls' evening school was fifty, and the average attendance from twenty to thirty. Industrial classes were established in the schools for the boys, who were taught tailoring. The girls, during a portion of each day, were instructed in needlework. Numerous articles of clothing had been made by them, and had been purchased at half-price, or supplied to the most destitute, the materials having been provided by the Committee and the friends of the institution. The Sunday School belonging to the Society was progressing, and each succeeding Sabbath increased the number of its pupils. A library had been established, which proved a great benefit to the children as well as to their parents. Three boys and a girl had been clothed by the bounty of the institution, and one boy had been sent out as an emigrant to Australia, through the aid of Mrs. Bosanquet. It was moved by Lord Claud Hamilton, and seconded by the Rev. W. Brock, that the Report be adopted, which was unanimously carried; and several gentlemen having addressed the Meeting, a vote of thanks to the Chairman concluded the business of the day.

COMPTON PLACE RAGGED SCHOOL.

ON Thursday Evening, the 11th of April, a very interesting Meeting took place of the mothers of the children attending the above school. More than sixty of them were entertained with tea in the school-room; and they were afterwards addressed by the Rev. A. Jenour, the Rev. P. B. Power, the Rev. Lawford Dale, Mr. Stabb, Mr. Andrews, and Mr. M. Ware. The speakers took the opportunity of impressing upon the parents the importance of their example in seconding the efforts of the teachers, and the fatal consequences to the welfare of their children, if they should see the precepts of religion and morality, which were inculcated in the schools, habitually violated in their own homes. All who were present seemed highly gratified with the proceedings of the evening, and several of the parents expressed, in lively terms, their gratitude for the interest taken in their children, and for the opportunities afforded them of receiving instruction, which they were unable to obtain elsewhere.